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ABSTRACT

This paper results from the Oregon Action Plan for Excellence, which defines goals and outcomes of the K-12 school experience. This Physical Education Concept Paper, the first of a series, is presented as a challenge to Oregon physical educators to confront constructively and resolve issues with implications for school physical education programs. It identifies and discusses the following issues and trends in physical education: (1) class size; (2) quality of instruction vs athletics and recreation; (3) coeducational physical education; (4) role models; (5) educational technology; (6) equity for all in programs and practices; (7) student evaluation and grading; (8) health-related or skill-related programs; and (9) administrative support and leadership. A list of questions for administrators and teachers to use to rate themselves and their programs concludes the paper. (JD)

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# PHYSICAL EDUCATION
## CONCEPT PAPER

Oregon Department of Education Number 1

## Issues and Trends

## INTRODUCTION

The Oregon Action Plan for Excellence represents a commitment to goal based education in our state. Defining the goals and outcomes of a student's complete schooling experience (grades K-12) includes identifying those essential learning skills and knowledge which are basic to all learning, crossing all curriculum areas, and taught in some fashion by all teachers in multiple subject areas. Secondly, the Action Plan includes identifying those skills and knowledge that are unique to each subject area of the curriculum. Finally, it includes a plan for teaching those two sets of skills/knowledge in an integrated way in every subject area of the school curriculum. In Oregon, we have chosen to call our program "Common Curriculum Goals."

Physical education is an integral part of the school curriculum in Oregon, and issues regarding this curriculum have a bearing on the pursuit of excellence in education. Some issues and trends identified here are specific to the state or to regions within it; some issues pertain to teaching, and are addressed to physical education teachers in the state; some relate to programs or activities and are specifically addressed to administrators; and some are the concern of the general public, as physical education teachers alone cannot resolve the issues of educational reform. This paper identifies and discusses some of those issues. Also discussed are the resultant effects, indicating trends in the quality and excellence of physical education.

Many of the issues will be discussed further in future concept papers pertaining to our three goal-based strands of movement skill, personal fitness, and self-management/social responsibility. There are, however, several larger issues with broader implications for school programs of physical education. The issues must be confronted, argued, and firmly resolved as we pursue quality and excellence in our unique curriculum area. These issues and some trends are the focus of this paper.

Each issue is presented as a challenge to every physical educator in the State of Oregon—to deal with and solve. The issues may be presented to administrators, members of school boards, parents and others to recognize, to confront constructively and to resolve. Each issue concludes with a list of discussion topics that teachers and administrators may use to rate themselves and their school programs.

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## ISSUE: *Class Size*

The central question concerning class size seems to be whether physical education teachers are viewed as managers of recreational activity or instructors of skills and concepts, as are teachers of other academic subject areas. Traditionally physical education classes in public schools have been larger than other classes, especially in middle school, junior high and high school. The justification in the past may have been that physical education consisted mostly of group exercises—or the subject area may have simply been considered less important than other subjects.

Other factors have added to this problem, such as scheduling constraints, budgeting compliance requirements for Title IX and PL 94-142, and numbers of teachers available. Nonetheless, the longer this condition exists, the more it reinforces the unspoken expectation that it should exist, or that it is acceptable for it to exist.

Research on effective schooling (Good and Brophy, 1987) has documented that students learn better when they have more direct interaction with the teacher. Larger classes mean less chance for that interaction. Yet, according to the current Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges, "Standards for Accreditation of High Schools" (1986), a class load in secondary physical education is computed at 2/3 of the actual enrollment. This means, for example, that a math teacher teaching four classes of 30 students each, gets credit for contact with 120 students in the formula. On the other hand, a physical education teacher who instructs four classes of 30 students each, comes in contact with 120 students but only gets credit for contact with 80 students (2/3 of 120 = 80), even though he/she must interact with the same number of students as the math teacher. The physical education teacher is assigned more students (2/3 of 180 = 120) and/or extra classes in order to carry a contact load that is "equal" to the math teacher.

Thus for 40-60 students per class, the physical education teacher is responsible for planning, attendance, fitness testing, instruction, classroom management, monitoring skill development, measuring performance, promoting personal hygiene, recording and reporting student progress and achievement and supervising safe use of equipment. It is no wonder many physical educators become "supervisors of recreational play."

OAR 581-22-515 addresses class size and should be consulted for direction when school administrators decide on student numbers. Given what we know about teaching and learning, it is contradictory to expect physical education teachers to interact with more students and yet expect students to produce the same quality outcomes as they do in other subjects. This issue MUST be addressed by teachers and administrators together if quality teaching and learning in physical education is to be achievable.

We may be doing the students in our schools a great disservice to count physical education as any less important, or less of a teaching job than any other subject area. When school districts adhere to a scheduling formula that allows, indeed even requires, more students to be in each class, it is implied that physical education is a "lesser" subject, and students are deprived of the most valuable resource they have: their teacher. The physical education teacher must get important feedback by observing student behavior, whereas the classroom teacher has additional time away from students to review papers and assess student progress. Both the standard formula for class size and the enforcement of standards must be dealt with for quality physical education to exist.

Besides its influence on quality of instruction, the issue of class size has a bearing on several other topics including:

- Lifestyle implications: practice and implementation of physical activities for life (Willgoose, 1974)
- Instructional focus: effect of class size on skills and content to be delivered and received by individual students
- Teaching strategies: diminished capability to individualize instruction when management of large numbers is the main concern (Presbie, 1977) (Puckett, 1976)
- Safety of students (i.e., liability of the teacher, program, school, etc.): numbers of students in one area, on equipment, etc. requiring supervision
- Evaluation: diminished capability to diagnose student needs, evaluate and record progress, give meaningful grades and reports, communicate with students

**ISSUE:** ***Quality of Instruction vs. Athletics and Recreation***

Physical education is the teaching and learning of movement skills, fitness skills, self-management/personal-social skills, and a commitment to physical activity that will last a lifetime. There is a difference between physical education and competitive interscholastic athletics just as there is a difference between algebra and calculus. Administrators, teachers and the public are becoming more aware that school programs of physical education are instructional and not just "fun and games" or preparation for athletics or recreation.

Physical education teaches motor skills, physical fitness skills, and self-management/social skills; it includes concepts researched by pedagogists, kinesiologists, biomechanists, physiologists, and should be applied by trained specialists. These skills, when internalized to the point that they become natural and habitual, are indicators of more general attitudes and values that reflect a healthier and more productive adult life. (Haskell, et al., 1985)

Most physical education skills are embedded in the content of sports, games, gymnastics, exercise, dance, and aquatics. While they may seem to be more like fun than learning vehicles, a planned program of physical education may provide students direct opportunities to learn and practice mathematics skills, spatial visualization, critical thinking, problem solving, and communicating both verbally and nonverbally—all contributing to a host of Essential Learning Skills.

We may not substitute recess for elementary physical education, nor interscholastic athletic participation for the secondary physical education curriculum. Additionally, we must show caution not to jeopardize quality instruction at any grade level and student safety by haphazard misassignment of teachers. Until we recognize and support a clear distinction between quality physical education and athletics/recreation, we will face a critical issue of instructional content and process in physical education programs.

The issue of quality of instruction is also a concern within our own profession. Ralph Wilcox (1987) contends that the poor quality of high school physical education programs is a "self-inflicted wound" because professionals in our field "continue to select activities characteristic of their university education, or similar to their own school experience, with little or no appreciation for the nature, needs, and wants of contemporary students, and showing little or no thought for change" (pp. 21-22).

Physical educators need to hear this indictment, examine their own willingness to grow professionally, and reduce their resistance to apply current thinking. This issue presents a strong challenge to the physical education profession as a whole. Strength is not in numbers, but in the efficacy of everyone within the profession. Thus, a sub-issue impacting on quality of instruction is the issue of change itself.

Change is inevitable, and our only choice is either to resist it, "kicking and screaming," or to accept it and make the most of it. Neither physical educators nor administrators can hold on to and justify old programs that are not working to meet current student needs. This issue presents a challenge to physical educators who must make some changes in how things are done. Teachers may need to review and reshape comprehensive physical education curriculum. Administrators may need to reshape and/or re-commit to the principles that hold teachers accountable for students learning.

In summary, school programs of physical education have an instructional basis, and are an integral part of the total school curriculum. Quality instruction should be an expectation in physical education just as it is in any other subject area. Colleagues, administrators, parents, and the community should expect quality of us, and we should expect it of ourselves. **Many teachers and programs <u>are</u> providing quality instruction;** those that are not are desperately in need of administrative support and leadership.

## ISSUE: *Coeducational Physical Education*

Since 1972, Title IX has prohibited sex-segregated classes in physical education except for specifically defined contact sports such as football, wrestling, rugby, ice hockey, boxing, and basketball. Even in those sport areas, Title IX specifies that separating the boys from the girls is permissible only for the actual playing of the game, and **not for the portion of a class devoted to practicing skills or playing lead-up games not requiring contact.**

Now, with the 1990's approaching, a state and national imperative, namely coeducational classes, is still a recurring issue for physical education. Why is this so? Part of the issue is historical; physical education has a long-perceived tradition of separate programs for boys and girls. The traditional, separate programs produced separate philosophies and patterns—of teaching strategies, program emphases, even program activities.

In many ways the term "co-instruction" may be a better label for this issue rather than coeducation because in most cases the issue is not one of putting boys and girls in the same classes, but rather of getting male and female physical education teachers to cooperate and work together.

Besides the tradition of separate programs, this issue exists today because the federal and state mandates did not adequately define, plan for or support the inservice retraining that teachers needed to change long-standing teaching styles and attitudes. Physical educators were faced with changing to a drastically different situation with little or no support or resources for retraining. Consequently, a few have chosen simply to continue in the traditional although gender-mixed style, or refused in practice to provide coeducational co-instruction. These programs continue to face problems and cause problems for the profession.

To suggest a parallel in today's times: no school district would think of beginning a new thrust, such as building-based improvement goals or implementing a new reading program, without careful planning, preparation and inservice training of the teachers to be involved. Because that did not happen with Title IX, we are still "picking up the pieces" over a decade later. Many of the pieces present themselves as false issues, such as the capability of girls and boys to learn together, and obscure the real issue of men and women teaching and working together cooperatively to change the curriculum structure and to meet the needs of today's students with effective co-educational co-instruction. This is an issue which must be faced by physical education teachers and continually monitored with administrative leadership.

Coeducation and co-instruction gives rise to several specific issues and topics, including:

- Effective use of limited management resources, including people, time, money;
- Efficient scheduling of classes; not having to worry about assignments that overload the women or the men, or artificially construct classes that have a certain mix of boys/girls;
- Unconscious teacher bias toward different groups of students, that affects quality of instruction (e.g., "watered-down" curriculum for low skilled girls)
- Locker room supervision as a factor influencing assignment of teachers;
- Encouraging students to take classes that are nontraditional for them;
- Teacher team planning, team building, team teaching;
- Articulation and crossover from elementary to middle/junior to secondary;
- Labeling classes or units that have a built-in cultural bias (e.g., "aerobic dance," "weight lifting," "body toning and shaping").

**ISSUE: *Role Models*** An issue related to co-instruction is that students of both genders, all races and ethnic origins, and different cultural groups need to have teachers who are role models. Role models are people who reflect the variety of options for how people are and can be; they are people who represent the real world of the school and community. Teachers who are role models are people who are not limited by stereotyped notions of who can, or should teach and/or play a particular sport. They are people who work against the perception that stereotypes doom a person to a specific rigid box with only certain confining expectations. Role models open "doors" for students.

Role models in physical education are people who show by example the many options for being a healthy person, a skilled and confident mover, and a fully functioning/contributing citizen of the community and the world. Without role models in physical education, some students are given a misrepresentation of what the world is like. Boys would grow up thinking only girls jump rope and girls would grow up without the idea that they could become strong, healthy women.

Role models in physical education must be exemplary role models. Leaders in physical education have repeatedly emphasized the need for physical educators to act as a positive role model for students' healthy behaviors and development. Recent research on several lifestyle variables found to be significantly associated with mortality rates assessed health behaviors of physical educators (Clark, Blair and Culan, 1988). Self-reported participation in regular physical activity levels of the physical education teacher sample was over 75 percent, more active than the average adult American. While 35 percent of adults age 30-44 in the U.S. smoke, only 13.9 percent of the physical education teacher sample were current smokers. This evidence is encouraging, and physical educators should be challenged to improve their status in these findings even more.

It is, however, unfortunate that <u>any</u> physical education teachers exhibit poor health habits, for they act as negative role models. The critical importance of role models in terms of teaching effectiveness was expressed by Johnson (1985), Bryand and Walbek (1970) and re-stated by Whitley, Sage and Butcher (1988): "What teachers are, communicates more than what they say; and, role modeling of desired behavior has a stronger modeling effect than verbal instructions" (p. 81). The old adage "Do as I say, not as I do" is simply <u>not</u> appropriate nor acceptable for teachers of physical education. As Good and Brophy (1987) stated, teachers cannot elect to be role models only on certain occasions or in certain ways. Teachers are at all times models for their students and physical education teachers must model a skilled, physically fit lifestyle. This issue must be faced by physical educators; it is unavoidable.

Additionally, the issue of role models impacts administrators, school board members and others in charge of education in our state. In many cases, role models in physical education simply are lacking. Secondary schools frequently are without both males and females among the physical education staff, or have widely disparate numbers (e.g., one woman to three or four men in the department).

Sub-issues for role models:

- Hiring practices to balance numbers of male/female physical education teachers;
- Hiring persons for coaching ability rather than instructional ability or gender balance;

- Lack of quality, certified professionals, especially women

Role modeling is a logical and significant step in the trend toward preventative education for the next generation of teachers, leaders, and students.

**ISSUE:** ***Technology*** Although the trend of technology in education may apply to all content areas, we must seriously consider this an issue in relation to physical education. The influence of technology on planning, delivery of instruction, recording and reporting of data, will require a new way of thinking about and defining what we can accomplish in physical education. Teaching will take on a new look as instructors incorporate audio, video, interactive video, data bases, information bases, spread sheets, word processing, charts, graphics, and merge letters to parents about classroom data. The repertoire of skills and management strategies available through technology will revolutionize education. It hasn't yet—but it will—alarmingly fast!

Physical educators are challenged by this issue to make of technology an ally, which is incorporated into the physical education setting. Teachers must learn and internalize computer skills, and become skilled in the use of various, valuable software packages, or physical education will be destined to be influenced by outdated perceptions of what the curriculum is and what its value is for students.

Technology is here to stay and will continue to influence education more in the future. The issue is not whether technology is useful, needed, or justified, but how much it will be applied in physical education. Physical education teachers currently utilizing technology, record test data, fitness scores, compare local scores to national norms, record equipment and numerous classroom management functions, assisted by the speed, capability and efficiency of computers. These physical educators provide parents with student data and information regarding student performance. These teachers significantly enhance their own accountability and program visibility. Physical educators in Oregon have information on computers or appropriate software. The Oregon HPERD Journal, published three times each year, has printed "Computer Express" (Michael, 1984), an article on current health and physical education software and technological use, in each issue since September, 1984.

The necessity for physical education teachers to obtain the training and skill necessary to keep technologically current is critical. However, in order to do that, teachers must not only be willing, but they must be provided efficient access to computers and appropriate software, given necessary inservice, and offered sufficient time to become proficient in using technological assistance.

Administrators must acknowledge the need for the physical education teacher to have access to a computer and other technological appropriations. This means administration must realize different software may be appropriate and necessary for the type of work done by the physical educator. Most significantly, this means that the technology needs of the physical education teacher will be viewed as viable as that of teachers in any other subject.

**ISSUE:** ***Equity for All In Programs and Practices***

As educators, it is generally agreed that separating out a group of students from the mainstream for more intensive work to master a learning objective is good educational practice. However, when most of the students in that group share a similar characteristic (e.g., not speaking English, or have a physical disability, or being low-skilled, or being female), stigmas and stereotypes tend to take over and we end up labeling the group, or the process, or the outcome.

The labeling phenomenon may often be unconscious, but it is done by students and teachers, and the results are visible and tangible. No one likes being lumped with the "klutzes" or the "retards" or the "refugees" or the "fatso" groups; and the resultant effects on the student's self-concept are educationally and socially devastating. Physical education has a powerful impact on development of self-concept and the positive or the negative influence must be recognized. (See goal 3.0 in Common Curriculum Goals for Physical Education, 1988.)

Related to this issue is the effect of self-fulfilling prophecy. Students who are labeled retards because of their special educational needs, are seriously affected by the self-fulfilling expectations of teachers and their own self-limiting view of themselves (Dusek, 1985). Teachers must be aware of their own biases and expectations so they can provide all students with an expectation of success. Teachers must help students recognize their strengths and assist them in setting goals to overcome areas of lesser strength or ability. Administrators likewise must be sensitive to this issue and give teachers assistance and feedback concerning equal treatment and equitable programs for all students.

Central to resolving the issue of equity are these factors:

- Grouping and regrouping of students (i.e., including when, why, how and how much to separate versus to mainstream; under what conditions, for what purposes, what benefits/harms will result?)
- Educating teachers (i.e., working with them to examine themselves; the attitudes, biases, and unconscious expectations they bring with them to the classroom or gymnasium; their history, culture, and heritage)
- Teacher training (i.e., equipping them with tools and techniques on how to educate their students about equity: by example, by experience, by different groupings and regroupings and discussions pertaining to equity and special needs)
- Accommodating different teaching styles and learning styles
- Endorsement or special certification for teachers of Adaptive P.E.
- Ranges of programs for ranges of students with special needs
- Integration built into the IEP for Special Education students
- Review of employment policies and practices for equity

**ISSUE: *Evaluation, Grading*** Grading is not synonymous with assessment. Student assessment is an ongoing (formative) process, based on Common Curriculum Goals and lesson objectives. Assessment in physical education is often done by visual observation. Grading should be based on standards for cognitive, affective, and psychomotor achievement and progress toward goals. The assignment of grades in physical education should be taken as seriously as grading in any other subject area, especially if physical education provides important skills and concepts conducive to a skillful and healthy lifestyle as we would want it to.

Within the issue of evaluation are two separate sub-issues: program evaluation (OAR 581-22-606) and individual student evaluation as required in OAR 581-22-602. Program evaluation includes planned and systematic assessment, including the extent to which a program is implemented or instructional unit accomplishes the pre-identified goals, the extent to which it is articulated (K-12), and the extent of the impact of the curriculum (program) on the students participating in it. Programs must be accountable for providing students with the outcomes expected of all graduates as indicated in the Common Curriculum Goals for Physical Education. Teachers should be held accountable for quality programs by the administrators, but they should also have the administrative understanding and support to provide a quality program.

Student evaluation should be consistent and continuing; it is a function of good diagnosis of student learning needs, and ongoing assessment of student progress toward defined goals of a school district's comprehensive program. Wood, Ritson and Hensly (1989) conducted a survey of grading practices in Oregon. The conclusions were that..."The grading practices of Oregon school physical educators do not appear to be different from practices of physical educators in other states." Oregon school physical educators depend heavily on high inference grading criteria such as attendance, dressing out, participation, attitude, effort, and sportsmanship, and not enough on more objective low inference criteria such as skills tests, knowledge tests, and skills observation. In addition, teachers with extracurricular or coaching responsibilities tend to use attendance and dressing out more frequently as grading criteria and use skills observations and subjective ratings less than other teachers. When the school district mandates the grading policy, attendance and dressing for activity tend to be used less frequently as criteria for grades.

These findings suggest that there are shortcomings in the grading practices of Oregon school physical educators. At a time when fiscal restraints and a national movement for excellence in education are putting pressure on all programs for accountability, physical educators must question the message they are sending to students, parents, taxpayers, administrators, and colleagues. We must ask ourselves the tough questions and begin the process of selecting grading criteria that reflect the Common Curriculum Goals of our program and the progress of our students toward mastery of those goals. High inference criteria such as attendance and dressing for activity (i.e., management concerns) may not reflect appropriate criteria for grading students in Oregon physical education programs. Adoption of sound grading practices reflecting the important program objectives and based on relevant and defensible grading criteria is crucial if our profession is to realize the positive image to which it aspires.

## ISSUE: *Health-Related or Skill-Related Programs*

It has long been a goal of physical education to improve the physical fitness of children and youth. Recently, public health officials have also recognized the importance of physical activity and fitness, as exemplified by the 1980 U.S. government report, Promoting Health/Preventing Disease: Objectives for the Nation (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1980). Included in these objectives for the nation were several specific calls for improved monitoring of physical activity and fitness of American children, as well as greater participation in cardiorespiratory (i.e., aerobic) fitness programs.

In order to increase the percentage of children and youth who demonstrate appropriate physical fitness levels, it seems self-evident that we must understand the factors determining physical fitness. It is well documented that genetic endowment is one determining factor of physical fitness (Klissouras and Weber, 1973). It has been just as carefully established that exercise habits can profoundly affect physical fitness levels (Haskell, Montoye and Orenstein, 1985).

The major purpose of the National Children and Youth Fitness Study (NCYFS II) was to assess the physical fitness and physical activity patterns of children. While the results of this national study indicated the health-related physical fitness of children is significantly associated with several variables of the physical education programs, only about a third of the children in the U.S. have daily physical education (Ross and Pate, 1987). Specifically, some of the findings found that youngsters who performed better on the cardiovascular endurance measures received more of their physical education from a specialist, were more likely to be administered physical fitness tests in school, and spent less time per day in recess. The summary of the NCYFS II indicated frequency with which schools provide physical education is inversely related to the amount of time those children are provided recess (Ross, et al., 1985).

The NCYFS I and II provide strong and compelling evidence for regular physical activity in the lives of children and adults. The value of physical activity is not the issue. What does seem to be controversial, even within our own profession, is the relative merit of health-related/skill-related fitness testing. Although some schools may still use exclusively skill-related fitness tests, this may be simply a lack of awareness of the newer tests, or a conviction that skill-related tests (e.g., agility, balance, and coordination) are necessary for high quality sports performance. These specific measures of skill do not directly function to promote fitness.

The value of health-related fitness (HRF) has been soundly reasoned by numerous authors in the U.S. (e.g., Corbin and Lindsey, 1985) and has served as the rationale for the development of the Health-related Tests (AAHPERD, 1980) such as, Physical Best or President's Challenge Test (1988). Use of the health-related tests appears to be supported by the majority of fitness researchers (e.g., Pate, 1987) and adopted as the basis for the National Children and Youth Fitness Study I and II (JOPERD, 1987).

Using only skill tests discriminates against the less genetically endowed, as well as the less physically mature boys and early maturing girls (Bouchard and Malina, 1983; Bouchard and Lortie, 1984).

> "The research evidence (Paffenbarger, et al., 1986) points out that it is not the inherited factor of fitness performance or athletic ability which is the key to good health and longevity. It is the **process** of regular exercise which modifies blood fat

levels, improves appearance, controls body fatness, and generally promotes the sensation of feeling good. Concentrating too much on the **product** of fitness by overuse of fitness norms and comparisons between children may effectively mask the real issue. An average fitness score may be the result for a child who is active but physically immature, and conversely, a high fitness score might be achieved by a child who is genetically gifted, but who is not receiving the health benefits of regular exercise" (Fox and Biddle, 1988, p. 49).

Given the concern for the welfare of all students, the fitness of each student is equally important, but particularly those whose fitness is <u>below</u> a desirable criterion for health. Additionally, because HRF cannot be gained through a one-time educational unit, program goals must be oriented towards the maintenance of lifetime exercise. Short-term fitness units, although valuable, are not as necessary as encouragement for and maintenance of regular exercise habits. Thus, the development of a positive psychological orientation, or choice behavior, is also a goal of a health-related physical education program (Fox, 1988).

Examination of the skill or health-related orientation of fitness tests and test items is critical in the proper selection of tests, appropriately measuring the performance of students, and holding programs accountable. Teachers are strongly urged to emphasize a health-related program of fitness activities and to use health-related fitness assessments.

Issues related to the health-related/skill-related issue are:

- The carry-through of the curriculum, which reflects a health orientation or a skill/sports orientation
- The need for a goal-based curriculum at all grade levels with appropriate assessment
- The need for daily quality physical education for all students
- The need for fitness motivation to be at the core of teaching

**ISSUE: *Administrative Support and Leadership*** Administrative support and leadership for quality physical education is perhaps the most important issue we face and is intimately tied to every issue and trend. Administration has the power to legitimize and empower physical educators by the actions taken to support, assist, and enhance the programs. Every issue discussed in this paper has interfaced with the overriding issue of administrative support and leadership. (i.e., If physical education teachers are assigned larger classes, the unconscious perception persists that it is merely physical education. If the elementary specialist is given double-sized classes in order to accommodate teacher prep-time, the very real message is that physical education is supervised play. Furthermore, if students at the elementary level do not have daily quality physical education, justified because they have recess, administration is supporting the message that physical education and recess are equivalent.)

The issues of quality instruction, equity in physical education, class size and the other issues discussed in this paper interact with this administrative issue. Professional associations can offer conferences, professional growth opportunities and curricular ideas, but administrators must encourage, or perhaps demand professional growth from physical education teachers. Typically, physical educators do not evaluate their own colleagues. This is usually the assigned role of the building administrator. Administrators must take the responsibility for the clinical supervision and evaluation of physical education teachers and classroom teachers responsible for physical education in their buildings. And they must be as concerned for the curriculum and quality of instruction provided in the gym and on the field as they are in other subjects.

Lack of administrative support and leadership for quality physical education programs conveys to students, parents, and teachers a lack of educational value attributed to physical education. Lifetime fitness habits are not cultivated during recess, nor learned during the superficial instruction provided when the teacher is faced with oversized classes. Quality physical education will remain only a dream without strong administrative support and leadership.

Related to this issue are at least the following sub-issues:

- Provision for appropriate inservice, conferences, and curriculum development
- Provision for technological resources and inservice
- Expectations of and provisions for continued professional growth
- Staffing needs to provide for positive role models for all students
- Funding of sufficient numbers of teachers
- Recognition and provision for appropriate adapted physical education services

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This paper is a synthesis of ideas and thoughts from a variety of sources reflecting current literature on physical education (curriculum and teaching), education reform (including effective schooling and school improvement), and the integration of educational reform concepts in physical education. References included are:


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# A REACTION
# FROM AN OREGON PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHER

TO: Bob Ritson, Specialist—Physical Education
Oregon Department of Education

When I read the "Curriculum Issues in Physical Education" paper the first time through, I found myself saying, "Yes, yes! That's how I feel." I'm not alone and I'm not the only physical educator that faces these problems. I found myself wanting to do something if only to bring a professional awareness among teachers and administrators. I feel that programs continue on and staff get caught up with life's "dailies" and the larger picture is lost.

At an advisory physical education meeting in Salem, the suggestion was made that each person complete a self-questioning evaluation after reading this paper. I found this to be a most exciting endeavor and considered it as a possibility for addressing so many of the problems we face as physical educators.

We also must ask ourselves some hard soul-searching questions.

It is my hope, that after reading this issues paper, all of us will seriously take this quiz and evaluate the program and feelings and then ask ourselves what we need to focus on and what we can do to improve the physical education program status in our schools.

## QUESTIONS EVERY ADMINISTRATOR COULD ASK:

1. Do you plan the needs of other discipline areas and use physical education time blocks as "filler" slots without regard to class numbers?

2. Do you acknowledge and clearly understand the difference between up-to-date physical education and the athletic program?

3. Do you feel the implementation of Title IX is more trouble than it is worth?

4. Do you hire a potential applicant because she/he is a "coach" first and a teacher second?

5. Do you reminisce about your own physical education teaching and feel physical education should still be taught that way?

6. Do you feel the valedictorian's grade in physical education is as important as his/her English, science or math grade?

7. Are you more comfortable with misassigning a teacher in physical education than in other discipline areas?

8. Do you encourage professional development opportunities among physical education teachers that are <u>not</u> coaching clinics?

9. Do you believe that physical education teachers have no use for computers in their offices or for student use?

10. Do you believe giving credit for athletic participation satisfies graduation requirements for physical education?

11. Do you feel a one year physical education requirement at the high school level is adequate?

12. Do you feel recess and physical education are equivalent and, therefore, interchangeable?

13. Do you ignore a poor teaching performance because it is easier to "let it go" than to deal with an uncomfortable evaluation or plan of assistance, rationalizing: "After all it's only P.E.?"

## QUESTIONS PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHERS SHOULD ASK THEMSELVES:

1. Do you ever view yourself as managers of recreation or playground in the physical education setting?

2. Do you see yourself as a coach first and teacher second?

3. Do you understand co-planning and co-instruction as a positive force in your physical education classes?

4. Are you able to pass a fitness test?

5. Are you overweight? Do you smoke? Do you exercise regularly?

6. Do you feel you are a positive role model?

7. Do you allow students to choose teams?

8. Have you stopped (or never started) teaching a unit (e.g. gymnastics, dance, combatives) because you feel incompetent or uncomfortable in a given area?

9. Do you seek and go to continuing professional development opportunities (e.g., classes, workshops, and conferences) that focus on physical education?

10. Are you approachable by all students at all talent levels?

11. Do you use a variety of different teaching styles or stick with an authoritarian/direct approach?

12. Do you feel a one year physical education requirement at the high school level is appropriate and adequate?

13. Do you keep yourself current with professional reading of trends, updated studies and findings?

14. Do you incorporate Essential Learning Skills/Common Curriculum Goals into your district program **AND** in your teaching?

15. Are you computer literate? Do you feel prepared for efficient use of technology in your planning and teaching?

# EXEMPLARY PROGRAMS

There are many noteworthy programs in the State of Oregon. Identifying programs of quality depends on a great number of factors including: size, course offerings, locale, funding, teacher preparation and staff development, teacher motivation, administration, active support, and the list goes on.

Teachers as exemplary role models and programs which can serve as examples of outstanding programs are both important for assisting students and other professionals in program improvement. If we want people to shoot for the **BEST**, then we need to identify criteria for recognizing the target.

Below are nine criteria for candidates of exemplary status.

Assess your program in terms of meeting the criteria; set your school district up for commendation. Could you stand the pressure of being identified?

1. Teachers prepare daily written lesson plans for all classes that reflect the yearly plan and goals of the district program (which includes Common Curriculum Goals), and that include an assessment component.

2. Teachers consistently demonstrate instructional methods that reflect goal-based planning.

3. Program activities reflect student needs and interests obtained in written form by a systematic assessment plan.

4. All classes are co-educational for students, co-instructionally planned and taught by well-qualified teachers.

5. Classes do not exceed 30 students per class period.

6. Classes meet a minimum of three times, preferably five times per week for a minimum of 135 minutes per week.

7. Professional development and commitment are demonstrated by all teachers in the program.

8. High levels of time-on-task are demonstrated by students during class time, to exceed 80 percent on a regular basis.

9. Grading practices reflect student progress and achievement of program goals with little or no regard to management issues such as dressing for class or attendance.

Written by: Robert J. Ritson , Oregon Department of Education Specialist for Physical Education, on 1 February 1989, 2:53 p.m.. These criteria are subject to change at any time without prior notice or justification. Anyone reading this information may at any time offer suggestions, criticism or information leading to programs that meet or exceed all of these criteria.

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**Verne A. Duncan**
**State Superintendent**
**of Public Instruction**

**Spring 1989**

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